

2007 CWD Management Changes

Beginning this fall, budget reductions will require the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to reduce Chronic Wasting Disease control work. A total of \$1,072,100 in state funding is no longer available and Wisconsin's federal CWD funding was reduced by \$656,000. This combined \$1,728,100 reduction represents a 60% cut to the "on the ground" operations budget for CWD management activities.

To meet these budget cuts, the DNR will suspend disease control activities and direct the remaining funds into limited deer testing and disease surveillance. Below are summaries of CWD management plans for the current fiscal year (July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008), listed by topic.

Hunter Service and Disease Surveillance Testing

- The DNR will test a total of 10,000 deer statewide. This is a reduction of more than half of the previous four years' average of 22,060 deer per year.
- Free CWD testing will be limited to areas where hunters are most likely to encounter CWD-positive deer.
 - These areas include the western and eastern disease eradication zones (DEZs) and two localized areas of the herd reduction zone (HRZ). The areas within the HRZ are Devil's Lake State Park and its immediate vicinity, and an area directly to the north of the eastern DEZ in Rock and Walworth Counties. The precise boundaries of these HRZ areas have not been finalized.
 - Additionally, 300 disease surveillance samples will be collected in Crawford and Portage Counties in areas around two deer farms that had deer infected with CWD.
- The number of CWD sample collection sites and hours of operation will be reduced. Details on specific collection locations and hours of operation will be available by late August.

CWD Zone Food Pantry Program

- In the CWD zones (both DEZs and the HRZ) the venison donation program is suspended to maximize the funding available for testing hunter-killed deer.
- Last year, more than 2,250 deer were donated, tested, processed and stored until results were returned.

DNR Sharpshooting

- The Department will suspend sharpshooting within CWD hotspots and new spark areas. In winter 2006, after the normal hunting seasons were closed, DNR staff removed 978 deer from the CWD zones, 26 of which tested CWD-positive.

CWD Research

- This year, the DNR will not fund any new research efforts.

Public Dialogue

- The DNR will complete a public dialogue process with the CWD Stakeholder Advisory Group. This includes the review of past CWD management efforts and existing knowledge of the disease, and recommendations for future direction. The Stakeholder Advisory Group is expected to complete their deliberations in January, 2008. To learn more about this process go to:
<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/wildlife/whealth/issues/CWD/dialogue.htm>

Winter Population Surveys

- The DNR will continue winter helicopter and fixed-wing population surveys if snow conditions allow. These surveys track trends in deer population abundance and assist ongoing investigations of the relationship between deer density and CWD prevalence.

Deer Carcass Disposal

- Within the DEZs, the Department will continue to dispose of hunter and car-killed deer by incineration or chemical digestion. The department is hopeful that they will be able to use the significantly less costly landfilling option for disposal of deer carcasses in the future.

Monitoring of Deer Farms

- The Department will continue, under its legal responsibility, to inspect fences and respond to escapes and will work in partnership with the Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection to bring all farmed cervid operations into compliance.

